THE WORLD

NUMBER CLXXXIV.

By *ADAM FITZ-ADAM.*

To be continued every THURSDAY.

THURSDAY, *July* the 8th, 1756.

I WAS always particularly pleased with that scene in the first part of Harry the fourth, where the humourous Sir John Falstaff, after upbraiding the prince with being the corruptor of his morals, and resolving on amendment, forms a very reasonable wish "to know where a commodity of good names may be "bought." It happens indeed a little unfortunately, that he immediately relapses into his old courses, and enters into a scheme for a robbery that night, which he endeavours to justify by calling it his TRADE: "Why, Hal, says he, 'tis my VOCATION, Hal: 'tis "no SIN for a man to LABOUR in his VOCATION."

As

As often as this paſſage has occurred to me, I could not help thinking that if we were to look narrowly into the conduct of mankind, we ſhould find the fat knight's excuſe to have a more general influence than is commonly imagined. It ſhould ſeem as if there were certain degrees of diſhoneſty which were allowable, and that moſt occupations have an acknowledged latitude in one or more particulars, where men may be rogues with impunity, and almoſt without blame.

It will be no difficult taſk to illuſtrate the truth of this obſervation, by ſcrutenizing into the conduct of men of all ranks, orders and profeſſions. This ſhall be the ſubject of to-day's paper; and I ſhall begin, where it is always good-manners to begin, with my betters and ſuperiors.

The tyrant, who to gratify his ambition, depopulates whole nations, and ſacrifices the lives of millions of his ſubjects to his inſatiable deſire of conqueſt, is a GLORIOUS prince. DESTRUCTION is his TRADE, and he is only LABOURING in his VOCATION.

The ſtateſman, who ſpreads corruption over a country, and enſlaves the people to enrich himſelf, or agrandize his maſter, is an ABLE miniſter; OPPRESSION is his CALLING, and it is no ſin in him to LABOUR in his VOCATION.

The patriot, who oppoſes the meaſures of the ſtateſman; who rails at corruption in the houſe, and bawls till morning for his poor bleeding country, may, if admitted to a poſt, adopt the principles he abhorred, and purſue the meaſures he condemned: ſuch a one is a TRADER in POWER, and only LABOURING in his VOCATION.

The

THE condeſcending patron, who fond of followers and dependants, deals out his ſmiles to all about him, and buys flattery with promiſes; who ſhakes the needy wit by the hand, and aſſures him of his protection one hour, and forgets that he has ever ſeen him the next, is a GREAT MAN: DECEIT is his VOCATION.

THE man in office, whoſe perquiſites are wrung from the poor pittances of the miſerable, and who enriches himſelf by pillaging the widow and the orphan, receives no more than his ACCUSTOMED DUES, and is only LABOURING in his VOCATION.

THE divine, who ſubſcribes to articles that he does not believe; who neglects practice for profeſſion, and God for his Grace; who bribes a miſtreſs, or ſacrifices a ſiſter for preferment; who preaches faith without works, and damns all who differ from him, may be an orthodox divine, and only LABOURING in his VOCATION.

THE lawyer, who makes truth falſhood, and falſhood truth; who pleads the cauſe of the oppreſſor againſt the innocent, and brings ruin upon the wretched, is a man of eminence in the world, and the companion of honeſt men. LYING is his TRADE, and he is only LABOURING in his VOCATION.

THE phyſician, who viſits you three times a day in a caſe that he knows to be incurable; who denies his aſſiſtance to the poor, and writes more for the apothecary than the patient, is an HONEST phyſician, and only LABOURING in his VOCATION.

THE fine lady of faſhion, who piques herſelf upon her virtue, perhaps a little too much; who attends the ſermon every ſunday, and prayers every week-day; and who if ſhe ſlanders her beſt friends, does it only to reform them, may innocently indulge herſelf in a little CHEATING at CARDS; ſhe has made it her VOCATION.

THE

THE tradeſman, who aſſures you upon his honeſt word that he will deal juſtly with you; yet ſells you his worſt commodities at the higheſt price, and exults at over-reaching you, is a GOOD MAN, and only LABOURING in his VOCATION.

THE infidel, who fond of an evil fame, would rob you of a religion that inculcates virtue, and inſures happineſs as it's reward; who laughs at an hereafter, and takes from you the only expectation that can make life endurable, is a DEALER in TRUTH, and only LABOURING in his VOCATION.

THE author, who to inſure a ſale to his works, throws out his ſlander againſt the good, and poiſons the young and virtuous by tales of wantonneſs and indecency, is a WRITER of SPIRIT, and only LABOURING in his VOCATION.

To take characters in the groſs, the gameſter, who cheats you at play; the man of pleaſure, who corrupts the chaſtity of your wife; the friend, who tricks you in a horſe; the ſteward, who defrauds you in his accounts; the butler, who robs you of your wine; the footman, who ſteals your linen; the houſekeeper, who overcharges you in her bills; the gardener, who ſends your fruit to market; the groom, who ſtarves your horſes to put their allowance in his pocket; in ſhort, the whole train of ſervants, who impoſe upon you in the ſeveral articles entruſted to their care, are only receiving their LAWFUL PERQUISITES, and LABOURING in their VOCATIONS.

I KNOW but of one ſet of men, who ought commonly to be excepted in this general charge; and thoſe are the projectors. The ſchemes of all ſuch gentlemen are uſually too romantic to impoſe upon the credulity of the world; and not being able to plunder their employers, they are LABOURING in their VOCATIONS to cheat only themſelves.

I WOULD not be miſunderſtood upon this occaſion, as if I meant to adviſe all people to be honeſt, and to do as they would be done by in their ſeveral vocations: far be it from me to intend any ſuch thing; I am as well aſſured as they are that it would not anſwer their purpoſes. The tyrant would have no glory without conqueſts; his miniſter no followers without bribes; the patriot no place without oppoſition; the patron no flatterers without promiſing; the man in office no perquiſites without fraud; the divine no pluralities without time-ſerving; the lawyer no clients without lying; the phyſician no practice without apothecaries; the tradeſman no country houſe without exacting; the fine lady no routs without cheating; the infidel no fame without proſelytes, and the author no dinner without ſlander and wantonneſs. The gameſter would be undone; the man of pleaſure inactive; the gentleman-jocky would ſell his horſe at half-price; and the ſteward, the butler, the footman, the houſekeeper, the gardener, the groom, and the whole train of ſervants loſe their neceſſary perquiſites.

THE old maxim, that "honeſty is the beſt policy," has been long ago exploded: but I am firmly of opinion, that the APPEARANCE of it might, if well put on, promote a man's intereſt, though the REALITY muſt deſtroy it. I would therefore recommend it to perſons in all vocations (if it be but by way of trial, and for the novelty of the thing) to put on now and then the APPEARANCE of a little honeſty. Moſt men have a natural diſlike to be cheated with their eyes open; and though it is the faſhion of the times to wear no concealment, yet to deceive behind the maſk of integrity, has been deemed the moſt effectual method. To further this end, the APPEARANCE of a ſmall portion of RELIGION would not be amiſs; but I would by no means have this matter overdone, as it commonly is. Going to prayers

every